



## Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

2300 Lake Elmo Drive  
Billings MT 59105

March 21, 2005

TO: Environmental Quality Council  
Director's Office, Dept. of Environmental Quality\*  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Director's Office	Lands Section
Parks Division	Design & Construction
Fisheries Division	Legal Unit
Wildlife Division	Regional Supervisors

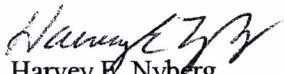
Mike Volesky, Governor's Office  
Sarah Elliott, Press Agent, Governor's Office\*  
Montana Historical Society, State Preservation Office  
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council  
Montana Wildlife Federation  
Montana State Library\*  
George Ochenski  
Montana Environmental Information Center  
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation  
FWP Commissioner Shane Colton  
Bob Raney  
Sharon Moore, DNRC Area Manager, Southern Land Office  
Other Local Interested People or Groups  
\* (Sent electronically)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for development to Lake Elmo State Park, and is submitted for your consideration. Improvements will include a play area for children, extension of the R-5 ware yard, a dog exercise area, trail improvements and development. A public meeting will be held April 20, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. in the public meeting room at Fish, Wildlife & Parks headquarters, 2300 Lake Elmo Drive in Billings. Questions and comments will be accepted until April 22, 2005.

If you have questions or need additional copies of the draft EA, please contact Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks at 247-2940. Please send any written comments by mail to: Terri Walters, Parks Manager at Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 2300 Lake Elmo Drive, Billings, MT 59105; or e-mail to [twalters@mt.gov](mailto:twalters@mt.gov).

Thank you for your interest,

  
Harvey E. Nyberg  
Regional Supervisor

Enclosure



# **DRAFT**

## **Environmental Assessment**

### **Lake Elmo State Park Improvements**







DRAFT

## MEPA/NEPA/23-1-110 MCA CHECKLIST

### PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Proposed State Action:** Development, Renovation, and Maintenance
2. **Name of Project:** Lake Elmo State Park Improvements
3. **Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency):**  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Region 5  
2300 Lake Elmo Drive  
Billings, MT 59105  
(406) 247-2955

4. **If Applicable:**  
Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: Spring 05  
  
Estimated Completion Date: Project 1 Fall 06  
Project 2 Fall 07

Current Status of Project Design (% complete):

Project 1: Install concrete sidewalk between the boat ramp and adjacent parking area, and construct a play area, lakeside of this sidewalk.

**Design 100% complete**

Project 2: Resurface Lake Elmo Trail, resurface Nature Trail Extension, and construct a dog exercise area.

**Design 100 % complete**

Project 3: Extend the existing storage facilities and parking area at Lake Elmo State Park.

**Design 20 % complete**

5. **Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township):** Lake Elmo State park is located on the north side of Billings; U.S. 87 north to Pemberton Lane, then 0.5 miles west. The park is located in section 10 and 15, Township 1 North, Range 26 East, in Yellowstone County. The park is 122 acres.

**6. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

	Acres		Acres
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain .....	0
Residential.....	0		
Industrial.....	0	(e) Productive:	
		irrigated cropland.....	0
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation.....	.5	dry cropland.....	0
		Forestry.....	0
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas.....	0	Rangeland.....	0
		Other .....	0

**7. Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.** Please see Appendix 2 for site location and Appendices 3-8 for site maps and plans.

**8. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:**

Lake Elmo State Park is located in the Heights Area on the north side of Billings. It is an urban (112, 257 visitors in 2004) park with multiuse recreational opportunities; including: swimming, picnicking, boating, fishing, hiking, and wildlife viewing. The following projects will enhance recreational opportunities, update the facilities for a multitude of recreational users.

The proposed action is threefold, and shall be discussed as such throughout this environmental assessment (EA). Project 1: install concrete sidewalk between the boat ramp and adjacent parking area, and construct a play area lake side of this sidewalk; Project 2: resurface Lake Elmo Trail and Nature Trail Extension and construct a dog exercise area; and Project 3: extend the existing storage facilities and parking area at Lake Elmo State Park.

**Project 1: Sidewalk and Play Area.** Currently there is no pedestrian trail connecting the beach area at Lake Elmo State Park to the boat launch. In addition, Lake Elmo State Park lacks a play area with manufactured playground equipment for children. The proposed project will connect the boat launch and beach areas with a concrete sidewalk, and create a play area between these two areas (Appendices 3 and 4). Completion of this project will allow users to safely access these areas via sidewalks; thus, not requiring users to walk on park roads. In addition, this project will enhance Lake Elmo State Park by providing recreational opportunities for families with young children.



A five-foot wide concrete sidewalk (100 linear feet) will be located on the lakeside of the boat launch parking area. Shoreline protection (85 linear feet) will be completed in this area as well. A six-foot wide concrete sidewalk (490 linear feet) will connect the boat launch area to the existing sidewalk at the beach area. A ten-foot long culvert will be placed along this stretch of sidewalk to prevent drainage problems from the existing storm-detention ponds.

The play area will be located lakeside of this six-foot wide sidewalk. The play area will be 121 feet by 60 feet (5870 square feet). The pre-manufactured playground equipment (Appendix 3) will be 1,650 square feet and the additional room within the play area will allow for added furnishings and independent play events. All equipment will meet standards set by the Consumer Products Safety Commission and the American Society for Testing and Materials, as well as being certified by the International Play Equipment Manufacturers Association. This will include providing a safe buffer zone surrounding the equipment. These standards are set according to how playground equipment is designed (height and type). Lakeside of the play area will be a five-foot wide concrete sidewalk (185 linear feet).

**Project 2: Resurface Trails and Dog Exercise Area.** The proposed project includes: widening and resurfacing the Lake Elmo Trail; resurfacing the Nature Trail Extension; constructing boardwalks over wet areas on the Lake Elmo Trail; and constructing a dog exercise area.

Lake Elmo trail is a 0.7-mile long trail around a portion of Lake Elmo from the Region 5 Headquarters to the boat launch (Appendix 5). Currently, it is four-feet wide and has a bark surface with a railroad tie border. The trail is awkward for people to walk side-by-side and it is difficult to run or bike on the bark surface. These problems have resulted in off-trail use and degradation of the surrounding area. In addition, wet areas have developed on the Lake Elmo Trail and Nature Trail Extension. The Nature Trail Extension is a 0.25-mile trail connected to Lake Elmo Trail. The Nature Trail Extension currently is mowed twice a year and has minimal surfacing. The Lake Elmo trail needs to be updated to meet recreationists' needs and to prevent further degradation of the site.

The proposed project includes: widening the Lake Elmo Trail to 6-feet wide; resurfacing Lake Elmo Trail with crushed stone (Appendix 6); adding a crushed stone surface to the Nature Trail Extension; and constructing boardwalks over wet areas on the Lake Elmo Trail. The crushed stone surface will provide access to the trail for hikers, bikers, runners, strollers, mobility impaired users, visually impaired users and wheelchairs. Upgrading these trails with crushed stone and boardwalks will create trails more appropriate for urban park use levels. The widened, solid trail surface will improve access for maintenance staff to clean-up litter, control weeds and perform other maintenance functions around the lake.



There is no designated dog exercise area at Lake Elmo State Park. Leashed dogs are currently permitted throughout the park, except on the public beach. A designated dog exercise area will allow users to exercise their dogs in a more relaxed manner without a leash and following certain regulations. The dog exercise area will be located lakeside of the Lake Elmo trail on the east side of the lake (Appendix 5). The area will be fenced (chain link with brown vinyl coating) on 3 sides (100-feet by 200-feet), and open to the lake to allow land and water use by the dogs. The fence will also be double gated so that dogs will not be able to leave the area while people and their pets are entering or exiting the enclosure. A dog clean-up station will be located within the fenced area; pet owners will be required to dispose of their pet's waste. Regulations will be posted in the designated dog exercise area to prevent excessive barking and waste problems. The addition of the dog exercise area will not change regulations on dogs in the rest of Lake Elmo State Park (*i.e.* leashed dogs will still be permitted).

**Project 3: Ware Yard.** Due to the sale of the old Region 5 Headquarters, there is no longer a ware yard for regional equipment and supplies. The proposed project will extend existing storage facilities and parking area at the Regional Headquarters located adjacent to Lake Elmo State Park. This project places the much needed ware yard at Region 5 Headquarters, allowing for maximum convenience and security. In addition, creating a new ware yard is cost effective, as it would cost approximately \$1,200 per month to rent storage facilities and a ware yard for current supplies. This project will be completed in 2 phases. Phase one (Appendix 7) will extend the existing storage area in a westerly direction. A new overhead door will be placed on the west wall of the existing storage area. A security fence (8 foot chain link with barbed wire on top) will be constructed on the west side of existing storage area to be used as a ware yard. The fence will include plastic slating to minimize the visual impact on trail users. The security fence will be approximately 250 linear feet and enclose 1/7 acre of disturbed grassland. This enclosed area will be shaped and covered with gravel. This project will also involve relocating an information kiosk and a short section of the Angel Lane entrance trail. Phase two (Appendix 7) will extend existing department vehicle parking area in a northerly direction. This will be done to create an even outside edge of the parking area with the storage facility, instead of the current indented edge. The extension will add 2,000 square feet to the existing parking area. The existing security fence (200 feet) will be moved north 10 feet. The extension area will then be graded and blacktopped. This project will involve relocating a portion of Lake Elmo Trail. Thus, this project should be completed in conjunction with the resurfacing of Lake Elmo trail (Project 2).

### **Explanation of Land & Water Conservation Fund Laws and the Role of the National Park Service.**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965 encumbers properties acquired or developed with LWCF funds. Such properties must be kept open to the public and maintained for outdoor recreation in perpetuity. Requests from the project sponsor for permission to convert LWCF assisted



properties in whole or in part must be submitted by the State Liaison Officer to the National Park Service Regional Director in writing. NPS will consider conversion requests if the following prerequisites have been met.

1. All practical alternatives to the conversion have been evaluated and rejected on a sound basis.
2. The fair market value of the property to be converted has been established and the property proposed for substitution is of at least equal fair market value as established by a State approved appraisal (prepared in accordance with uniform Federal appraisal standards) excluding the value of structures or facilities that will not directly enhance its outdoor recreation utility.
3. The property proposed for replacement is of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location as that being converted.

**LWCF Mitigation Proposal.** Project 3 involves utilizing 6000 square feet (0.14 acres) of land as part of new storage facilities. Currently, the parcel proposed for the new ware yard is within the official LWCF Section 6(f) boundary. Converting this parcel to a use other than outdoor recreation requires replacement property from outside the boundary. The parcel proposed for exchange in this project is currently within the Region V Parks administrative area, and has never been designated as a recreation area. FWP considers the replacement property (Appendix 5, blue rectangle) to be of higher recreation usefulness than the parcel being converted (Appendix 5, yellow rectangle). The parcel being converted to the ware yard is disturbed grassland. The replacement property that will be converted to recreation land is native grassland with planted ponderosa pine and other tall shrubs.

Converting the recreation land into a much needed ware yard allows for maximum convenience and security. The land swap will only occur after all NPS prerequisites have been completed. Alternatives to the ware yard were investigated and it would cost FWP approximately \$1,200 per month to rent storage facilities and a ware yard for current supplies. A commissioned appraisal will be performed to establish fair market value of both parcels of land and to make sure they are at least equivalent in value. Finally, the location of the proposed recreation land and the vegetation occurring there make this parcel at least equivalent if not better than the parcel being converted to the ware yard.







Project 1: Concrete sidewalk and shoreline stabilization will be constructed lakeside of parking lot. Boat launch is located in the background of picture. Picture was taken looking southwest.



Project 1: A sidewalk will connect beachside area (concrete sidewalk shown in foreground) to boat launch area (shown in background of picture). Play area will be located in grassy area to the left of the sign. Picture was taken looking northwest.



Project 2: Lake Elmo trail and Nature Trail Extension conjunction (nature trail is on right side of picture). Picture shows a wet area that will need a boardwalk, surface of the Lake Elmo Trail, and railroad tie border. Picture was taken looking south.



Project 3, Phase 1: New ware yard will be located between trails and storage facility shown in background of picture. Trails shown are Lake Elmo Trail and Angel Lane Trail junction. Picture was taken looking northeast



Project 3, Phase 2: Fence will be moved and parking lot will be extended to be even with storage facility shown in background. Picture was taken looking southwest.





**9. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:**

**Alternative A: No Action**

Project 1: Currently there is no trail connecting the beach side area at Lake Elmo State Park to the boat launch area. In addition, Lake Elmo State park lacks a play area for children. If no improvements are made to the site, pedestrian access will continue to be limited and possibly unsafe between the boat-launch and beach areas. In addition, Lake Elmo State Park will not be enhanced by adding recreational opportunities for families with young children.

Project 2: Lake Elmo trail is a 0.7-mile long trail around a portion of Lake Elmo from Region 5 Headquarters to the boat launch. Currently it is four-feet wide and has a bark surface with a railroad tie border. The trail is awkward for people to walk side-by-side and it is difficult to run or bike on the bark surface. These problems have resulted in off-trail use and degradation of the surrounding area. In addition, wet areas have developed on the Lake Elmo Trail and Nature Trail Extension. If no improvements are made to the site, further deterioration will occur and valuable site potential will not be reached. Access will continue to be difficult and limit users. Currently there is not a designated dog exercise area. Dogs are permitted in the park on-leash only. Without the addition of a dog exercise area, access will be limited for dogs and their owners.

Project 3: Due to the sale of the old Region 5 Headquarters, there is no longer a ware yard at the headquarters. If no improvements are made, costs will incur (approximately \$1,200 per month) for renting storage facilities and a ware yard for current supplies that were previously stored at the Old Region 5 Headquarters. In addition, employees will incur travel and time costs traveling to and from rented storage facility and ware yard not located at new Region 5 Headquarters.

**Alternative B: Proposed Development**

Project 1: The proposed project will connect the boat launch and beach areas with a concrete sidewalk, and create a play area between these two areas. Completion of this project will allow users to safely access these areas via sidewalks and not require them to walk on park roads. In addition, this project will enhance Lake Elmo State Park, by providing recreational opportunities for families with young children.

Project 2: The proposed project includes: widening the Lake Elmo Trail to 6-feet wide; resurfacing Lake Elmo Trail with crushed stone; adding a crushed stone surface to the Nature Trail Extension; constructing boardwalks over wet areas on the Lake Elmo Trail; and constructing a dog exercise area. The crushed stone surface will allow access to

the trail for hikers, bikers, runners, strollers, mobility impaired users, visually impaired users and wheelchairs. Upgrading these trails with crushed stone and boardwalks will create trails more appropriate for an urban park. This project will update trails at Lake Elmo State Park for a wider variety of recreational users. In addition, the resources of the site will be protected and preserved for generations to come. The fenced, designated dog exercise area will allow users to have land and water access for their dogs, and a more relaxed area for exercising their dogs. Having a designated dog area will allow users to have an unleashed dog and thus minimize unleashed dogs in other portions of the park (e.g. beach area). Regulations will be posted in the designated dog exercise area to prevent excessive barking and waste problems. The dog exercise area will enhance Lake Elmo State park for all recreationists by providing a designated area for dogs.

Project 3: The proposed project will extend existing storage facilities and parking area at Lake Elmo State Park. This project places the much needed ware yard at Region 5 Headquarters, allowing for maximum convenience and security. In addition creating a new ware yard is cost effective, as it would cost approximately \$1,200 per month to rent storage facilities and a ware yard for currently displaced supplies.

**Alternative C:      Renting Storage facilities**

Project 3: Renting a storage area and ware yard for currently displaced supplies was investigated. It would cost FWP approximately \$1,200 per month in rental fees. In addition, there would be costs incurred by FWP employees traveling to and from the off-site location.

**Alternative D:      High Level of Development**

A high level of development will not be assessed, as there are management, monetary, and spatial constraints for each project.

**10.      Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.**

**(a)      Permits:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
--------------------	---------------	---------------------



**(b) Funding:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
MFWP	Project 1	\$29,620
	Project 2	\$62,430
	Project 3	\$68,370
	Total	\$160,420
		Funding sources being investigated

**Project 1:**

8 foot sidewalk; 28 linear feet (LF) @ \$5.00 per square feet (SF)	\$1,120
6 foot sidewalk; 490 LF @ \$5.00 per SF	\$14,700
10 foot culvert @ \$30.00 per LF	\$300
5 foot sidewalk at boat ramp 100 LF @ \$5.00 per SF	\$2,500
5 foot sidewalk at play area 185 LF @ \$5.00 per SF	\$4,625
85 LF shoreline protection @ \$75.00 per LF	\$6,375
<u>Play area 5,870 SF</u>	<u>\$20,000</u>
Total	\$49,620

**Project 2:**

Crushed stone resurfacing	\$61,230
Boardwalks	\$1,200
Dog exercise area fencing	\$2,869
<u>Dog exercise area signs</u>	<u>\$173</u>
Total	\$65,472

**Project 3:**

Cost estimate has not been finalized.

**(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior	Section 6(f) of the federal Land & Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965

**11. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA**

Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks Region 5  
Parks Division  
Wildlife Division  
Fisheries Division  
Design and Construction Bureau

Montana Department of Commerce—Tourism  
PO Box 200533  
1424 9<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Helena, MT 59620-0533

Montana Natural Heritage Program—Natural Resources Information System  
PO Box 201800  
1515 East Sixth Avenue  
Helena, MT 59620-1800

Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology  
1300 N. 27<sup>th</sup>  
Billings, MT 59101

State Historic Preservation Office  
Montana Historical Society  
1410 8th Avenue  
Helena, MT 59620

## PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

### A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?			X			1a.
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil that would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
c. **Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				1c.
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?			X		Yes	1d.
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 1a. Project 3. Soil will be disturbed during proposed extension of the parking area and maintenance facilities. This area has been previously disturbed.
- 1c. The proposed project construction will take place in areas that have been modified in the past.
- 1d. Project 1: Proposed bank stabilization will utilize Best Management Practices (BMP) to prevent erosion problems. This bank stabilization will protect the shoreline of Lake Elmo from deterioration.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))			X		Yes	2a.
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		NA				
f. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

2a. Minor amounts of dust will be temporarily created during the construction phase of all 3 projects.

- \* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- \*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- \*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- \*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X		Yes	3b.
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		NA				
m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		NA				
n. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

3b. Project 1: The proposed project will add a ten-foot long culvert below the proposed sidewalk to prevent drainage problems from the existing storm-detention ponds. In addition, BMP's will be utilized for the shoreline protection to prevent drainage problems

Project 2: The proposed addition of boardwalks to the Lake Elmo Trail will cause changes in drainage patterns of wet areas. This should allow areas to drain in a more natural manner and remove any barriers that were created by the railroad ties on the Lake Elmo Trail. Adding a crushed stone surface to the Nature Trail may alter drainage patterns in localized areas of the trail.

Project 3: The proposed changes in the parking area and grading 1/7 acre of disturbed grassland will alter surface runoff. Best Management Practices will be utilized to minimize the impact from these changes.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



4. <u>VEGETATION</u>	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X		*	Index 4a.
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				4c.
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X		Yes	4e.
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		NA				
g. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 4a. Project 2: The Nature Trail is currently a mowed trail and the proposed project will create a trail with a crushed stone surface. The removal of plant species will alter the plant diversity and abundance at a local level; however it will not affect the larger plant population at Lake Elmo State Park.
- Project 3: The proposed parking lot and maintenance facilities extension will cover 1/7 acre of disturbed grassland. The over-covering of disturbed grassland will alter the plant diversity and abundance at a local level; however it will not affect the larger plant population at Lake Elmo State Park. In addition this area has been disturbed in the past.
- 4c. The Natural Heritage Program found no plant species of concern at Lake Elmo State Park.
- 4e. Project 2: Increased traffic on the Lake Elmo Trail and the Nature Trail may increase the spread of noxious weeds. Area is currently treated for noxious weeds through contracting with the Yellowstone County Weed District, and their treatments will continue. The proposed solid trail surface will improve access for weed control.

- \* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- \*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- \*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- \*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

<b>** 5. FISH/WILDLIFE</b>  <b>Will the proposed action result in:</b>	<b>IMPACT *</b>				<b>Can Impact Be Mitigated *</b>	<b>Comment Index</b>
	<b>Unknown *</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minor *</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?			X			5c.
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				5f.
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)		NA				
i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)		NA				
j. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

5c. Project 2: Proposed resurfacing of the Nature Trail may alter the diversity or abundance of nongame species in the specific area of the trail; however, the area has been disturbed in the past and changes should not affect the diversity or abundance of nongame species within the wider area of Lake Elmo State Park.

Project 3: Proposed project may alter the diversity or abundance of nongame species in the location of the new ware yard and parking lot extension; however, the area has been disturbed in the past and changes should not affect the diversity or abundance of nongame species within the wider area of Lake Elmo State Park.

5f. The Natural Heritage Program identified boundaries of 3 species of concern overlaying Lake Elmo State Park. The Bureau of Land Management identifies the milk snake *Lampropeltis triangulum*, the western hognose snake *Heterodon nasicus* and the spiny softshell turtle *Trionyx spiniferus* as sensitive species. The habitat of the milk snake is rock cliffs (Reichel and Flath 1995). The proposed projects are not located in areas that provide adequate milk snake habitat (Puchniak 2004). The Natural Heritage Program records for the milk snake are older, and therefore the proposed projects will not negatively impact this species (Puchniak 2004). The habitat of the western hognose snake is arid areas, farmlands, and floodplains, particularly those with gravelly or sandy soil (Reichel and Flath 1995). The western hognose snake is likely in the area (Puchniak 2004). It is not believed that the proposed projects will negatively impact the hognose snake habitat once in place or during construction (Puchniak 2004). The habitat of the spiny softshell is sandy banks of large-river systems (Reichel and Flath 1995). This habitat type will not be impacted by the proposed projects. In addition, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has no records of the spiny softshell in Lake Elmo State Park (Puchniak 2004), nor are there locations on record with the Natural Heritage Program.

Puchniak, Allison. November 29, 2004. Personal Communication. Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks, Native Species Biologist.  
Reichel, J. and Dennis Flath. 1995. Identification of Montana's Amphibians and Reptiles. Montana Outdoors.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



## B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X		Yes	6a.
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:		X				

### Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a. Noise levels at Lake Elmo State Park will increase during construction of all three proposed projects and may affect the surrounding neighbors. This noise will be temporary and occur during daylight hours.

Project 2: Regulations will be posted and enforced to prevent excessive barking in the dog exercise area.

- \* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- \*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- \*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- \*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

7. <u>LAND USE</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

There are no land use concerns with the proposed projects.

- \* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- \*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- \*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- \*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		NA				
e. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

There are no risk or health hazard concerns with the proposed projects.

- \* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- \*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- \*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- \*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X		Yes Positive impact	9e.
f. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 9e. Project 1. The proposed project will connect the boat launch area and beach areas with a concrete sidewalk. Completion of this project will decrease traffic hazards by providing a sidewalk between the boat launch and beach areas. Currently pedestrian traffic must walk on park roads between these two areas.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased used of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources						10e.
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.						10f
g. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

There will be no alterations to public services, taxes or utilities due to the proposed projects.

10e. Project 1: State Recreation Trails Program Grant (FY 2005)  
Project 2: State Recreation Trails Program Grant (FY 2006)  
Project 3: Funding options are being investigated.

10f: Project 1: Maintenance costs will be equal to or less than current maintenance costs of boat launch and beach areas.  
Project 2: Maintenance costs will be equal to or less than current maintenance costs of Lake Elmo trail and Nature Trail Extension.  
Project 3: Maintenance costs will be minimal (e.g., fence repair, snow removal due to large snow-fall) and will be absorbed within the regional headquarters operations budget.

- \* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- \*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- \*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- \*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

<b>** 11. AESTHETICS/RECREATION</b>  <b>Will the proposed action result in:</b>	<b>IMPACT *</b>				<b>Can Impact Be Mitigated *</b>	<b>Comment Index</b>
	<b>Unknown *</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minor *</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?			X		Yes	11a.
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				11a.
c. **Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)			X Positive			11c.
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		NA				
e. Other:		X				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

- 11a. Project 3: The parking lot and maintenance facilities extension will increase the developed area at Lake Elmo State park. The alteration has been kept minimal to prevent aesthetic degradation of the site. In addition, plastic slating will be included with the fencing to minimize the visual impact on trail users.
- 11c. The proposed projects will improve both the quality and quantity of tourism at Lake Elmo State Park. Please see Appendix 8 for the tourism report.

- \* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- \*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- \*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- \*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				12a
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a)		NA				
e. Other:						

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

12a. Please see Appendix 9 for SHPO clearance letter.

- \* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- \*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- \*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- \*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

## SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE  Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		NA				
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		NA				

**Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):**

In reviewing all projects, there was no significant cumulative impact to the biological or human environment.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



## **PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW, CONTINUED**

### **2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

There will be minor alterations to the land resources. The proposed project construction will take place in areas that have been modified in the past. Soil will be disturbed during proposed extension of the parking area and maintenance facilities. Proposed bank stabilization will utilize BMP's to prevent erosion problems.

Air quality will be minimally affected during the construction phase of all 3 projects. Minor amounts of dust will be temporarily created during the construction phase.

The effect on water in the area will be minor and limited to drainage alteration. A ten-foot long culvert will be added to prevent any drainage problems from the existing storm-detention ponds. In addition, BMP's will be utilized for the shoreline protection to prevent drainage problems. The proposed addition of boardwalks to the Lake Elmo Trail will cause changes in drainage patterns of wet areas. This should allow areas to drain in a more natural manner and remove any barriers that were created by the railroad ties on the Lake Elmo Trail. Adding a crushed stone surface to the Nature Trail may alter drainage patterns in localized areas of the trail. The proposed changes in the parking area and grading 1/7 acre of disturbed grassland will alter surface runoff. Best Management Practices will be utilized to minimize the impact from these changes.

Vegetation will be minimally affected by the proposed projects and limited to localized removal of vegetation and weed management. Over-covering of vegetation due to surfacing the Nature Trail and extending the parking lot and maintenance facilities will alter the plant diversity and abundance at a local level; however, it will not affect the larger plant population at Lake Elmo State Park. The proposed parking lot and maintenance facilities extension will cover 1/7 acre of disturbed grassland. These areas have been disturbed in the past. Increased traffic on the Lake Elmo Trail and the Nature Trail may increase the spread of weeds. Area is currently treated for noxious weeds through contracting with the Yellowstone County Weed District, and their treatments will continue.

Fish and wildlife species will be minimally affected by the proposed projects and the impact will be limited to nongame species. Proposed resurfacing of the Nature Trail and the extension of the parking lot and ware yard may alter the diversity or abundance of nongame species in localized areas. These areas have been disturbed in the past and changes should not affect the diversity or abundance of nongame species within the wider area of Lake Elmo State Park.

Noise levels at Lake Elmo State Park will increase during construction of all three proposed projects and may affect the surrounding neighbors. This noise will be temporary and occur during daylight hours. Regulations will be posted and enforced to prevent excessive barking in the dog exercise area.

There are no land use concerns with the proposed projects.

There are no risk or health hazard concerns with the proposed projects.

There will be a beneficial community impact to these projects. A traffic hazard will be decreased by connecting the boat launch and beach areas with a concrete sidewalk.

There will be no alterations to public services, taxes or utilities due to the proposed projects.

There will be a minor alteration to aesthetics at Lake Elmo State Park. The parking lot and maintenance facilities extension will increase the developed area at Lake Elmo State park. The alteration has been kept minimal to prevent aesthetic degradation of the site. In addition, plastic slating will be included with the fencing to minimize the visual impact on trail users.



The proposed projects will improve both the quality and quantity of tourism at Lake Elmo State Park

There will be no alterations to cultural and historical resources.

In reviewing all projects, there was no significant cumulative impact to the biological or human environment.

### **PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT**

Lake Elmo State Park is an urban park with multiuse recreational opportunities; including: swimming, picnicking, boating, fishing, hiking, and wildlife viewing. The proposed projects will increase recreational opportunities, update the facilities for a multitude of recreational users.

This environmental assessment did not reveal any significant negative impacts on the physical and human environment. Most minor impacts will be mitigated. No threatened and endangered species will be affected. No unique geological or physical features will be affected. The proposed development will increase visitor enjoyment at the site.

### **PART IV. EA CONCLUSION SECTION**

1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required (YES/NO)? **NO** If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.

Based on an evaluation of impacts to the physical and human environment under MEPA, this environmental review found no significant negative impacts from the proposed action at Lake Elmo State Park. Thus, an EIS is not necessary and an environmental assessment is the appropriate level of analysis.

2. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

A public meeting will be held to gather and address comments about the proposed improvements from the public.

The public will be notified in the following ways to comment on the EA of the Lake Elmo State Park Improvements:

1. Legal notices will be published in the *Billings Gazette* and the *Helena Independent Record*.
2. Legal notice and the draft EA will be posted on the Fish, Wildlife, & Parks web page: <http://fwp.state.mt.us>

This level of public involvement is appropriate since all negative impacts were minor, and most could be mitigated.

3. Duration of comment period, if any.

The public comment period will be 30 days. Comments may be emailed to [twalters@mt.gov](mailto:twalters@mt.gov), or written comments may be sent to the following address: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Attention: Lake Elmo State Park EA  
2300 Lake Elmo Drive  
Billings, MT 59105

4. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

Sally Schrank  
Independent contractor  
112 Riverview C  
Great Falls, MT 59404  
406-268-0527

Terri Walters  
Park Manager  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
2300 Lake Elmo Drive  
Billings, MT 59105  
406-247-2940

## APPENDICES

1. 23-1-110 MCA Project Qualification Checklist
2. Site Location Map
3. Site Plan, Project 1
4. Site Map, Project 1
5. Site Map, Project 2 and 3
6. Lake Elmo Trail Cross-section
7. Site Plan, Project 3
8. Tourism Report – Department of commerce
9. SHPO letter

**APPENDIX 1**  
**HB495**  
**Project Qualification Checklist**

**Date** November 15, 2004

**Person Reviewing** Sally Schrank

**Project Location:** Lake Elmo State park is located on the north side of Billings; U.S. 87 north to Pemberton Lane, then 0.5 miles west. The park is located in section 10 and 15, Township 1 North, Range 26 East, in Yellowstone County. The park is 122 acres.

**Description of Proposed Work:** The proposed action is threefold. Project 1: install concrete sidewalk near boat ramp and adjacent parking area and install play area; project 2: resurface Lake Elmo Trail and Nature Trail Extension; and project 3: extend the existing ware yard at Lake Elmo State park.

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under HB 495 rules. (Please check    all that apply and comment as necessary.) Capital Construction projects - prepared by D & C; Force Account projects - prepared by Region.

☒ A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?

Comments: The resurfacing of lake Elmo Trail and the nature trail extension would widen the trails by two feet.

☒ B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?

Comments: The proposed project would extend existing storage facilities in a westward direction and a new overhead door would be placed on the west wall of the existing storage area.

☐ C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?

Comments:

☒ D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?

Comments: The proposed project would extend parking area and create a new ware yard at Lake Elmo State Park. The extension would add 2,000 square feet to the existing parking area. The new ware yard would encompass 1/7 acre of grassland..

☐ E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a double wide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?

Comments:

☒ F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?

Comments: Shoreline protection will be placed along approximately 20 feet of bank near the Lake Elmo boat ramp.

☐ G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?



Comments:

☐ H. Any new above ground utility lines?

Comments:

☐ I. Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?

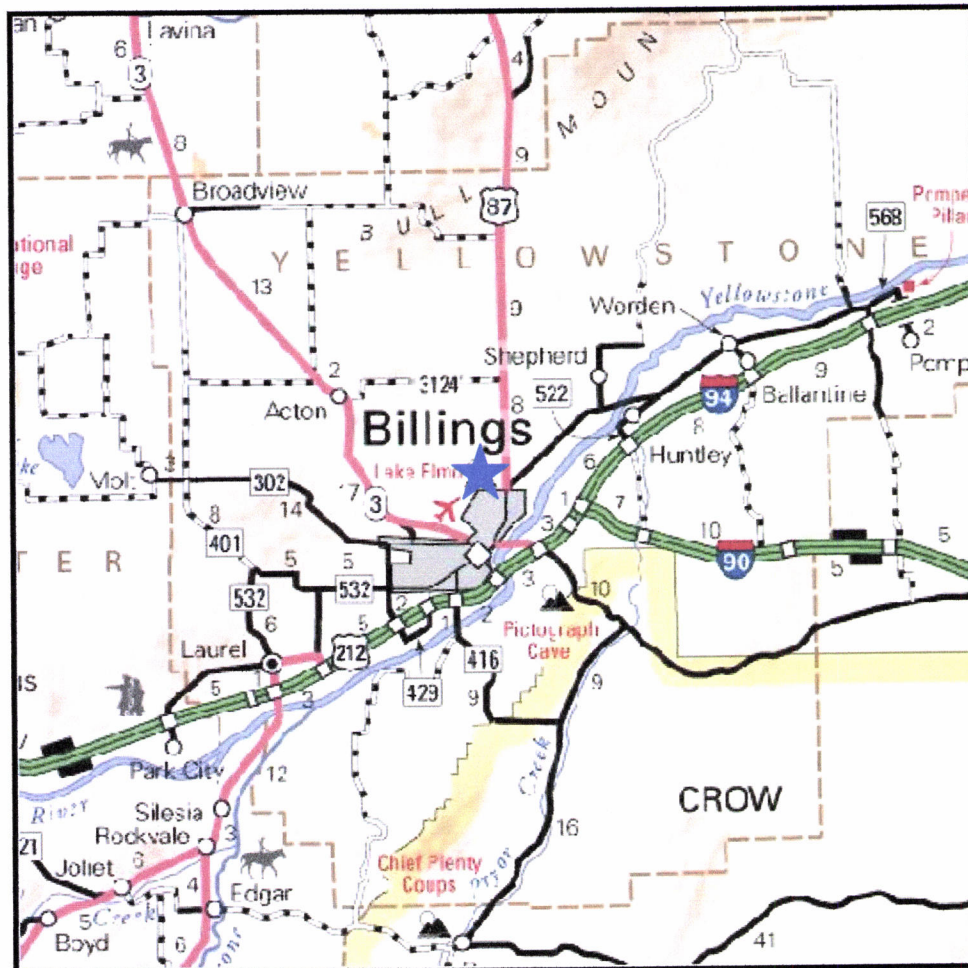
Comments:

☐ J. Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?

Comments:

**If any of the above are checked, HB 495 rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.**

**APPENDIX 2**  
**Site Location Map**  
**Lake Elmo State Park**  
**Township 1 North, Range 26 East, Section 10 and 15; 122 acres total**



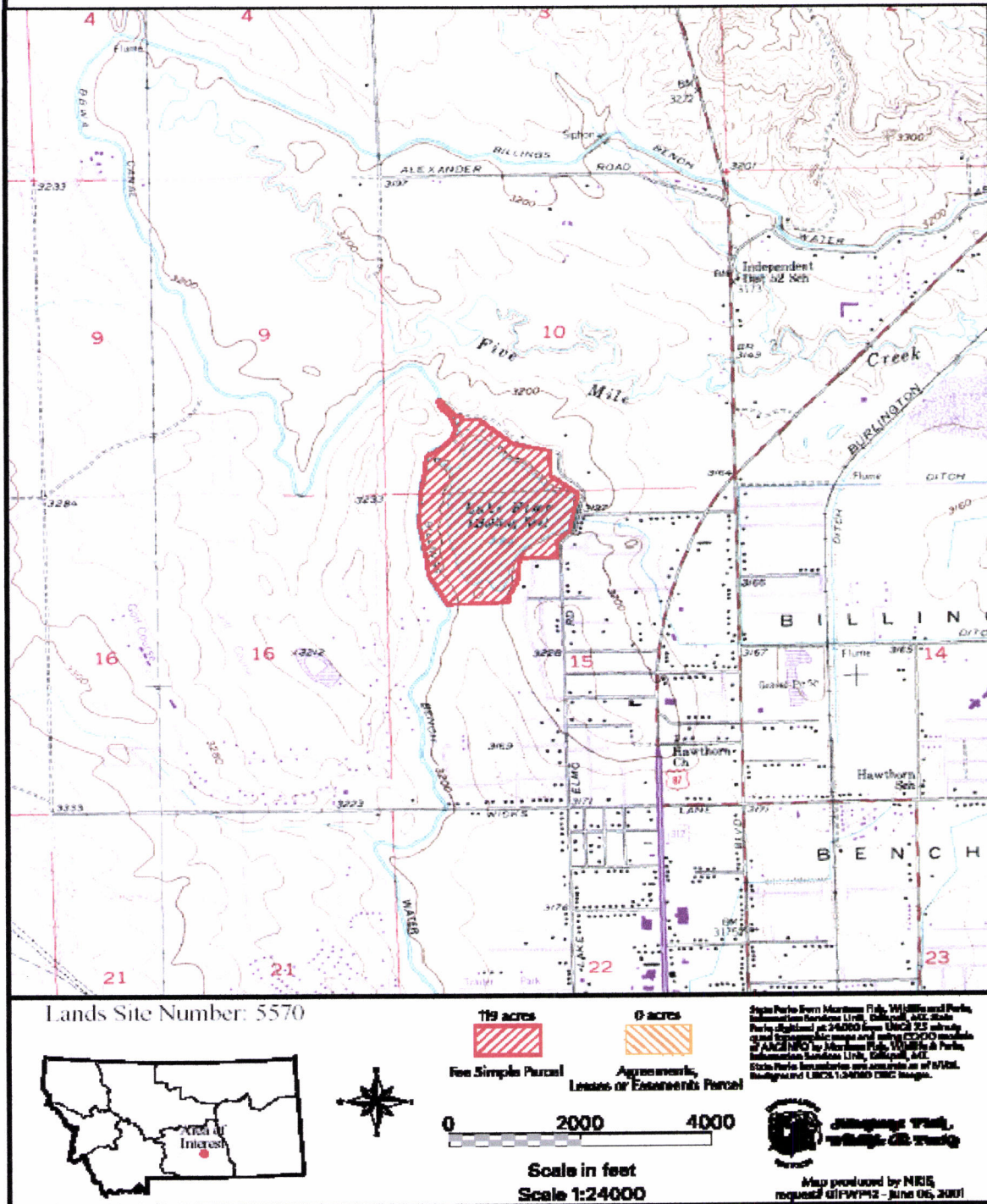
Blue star denotes location of Lake Elmo State Park.





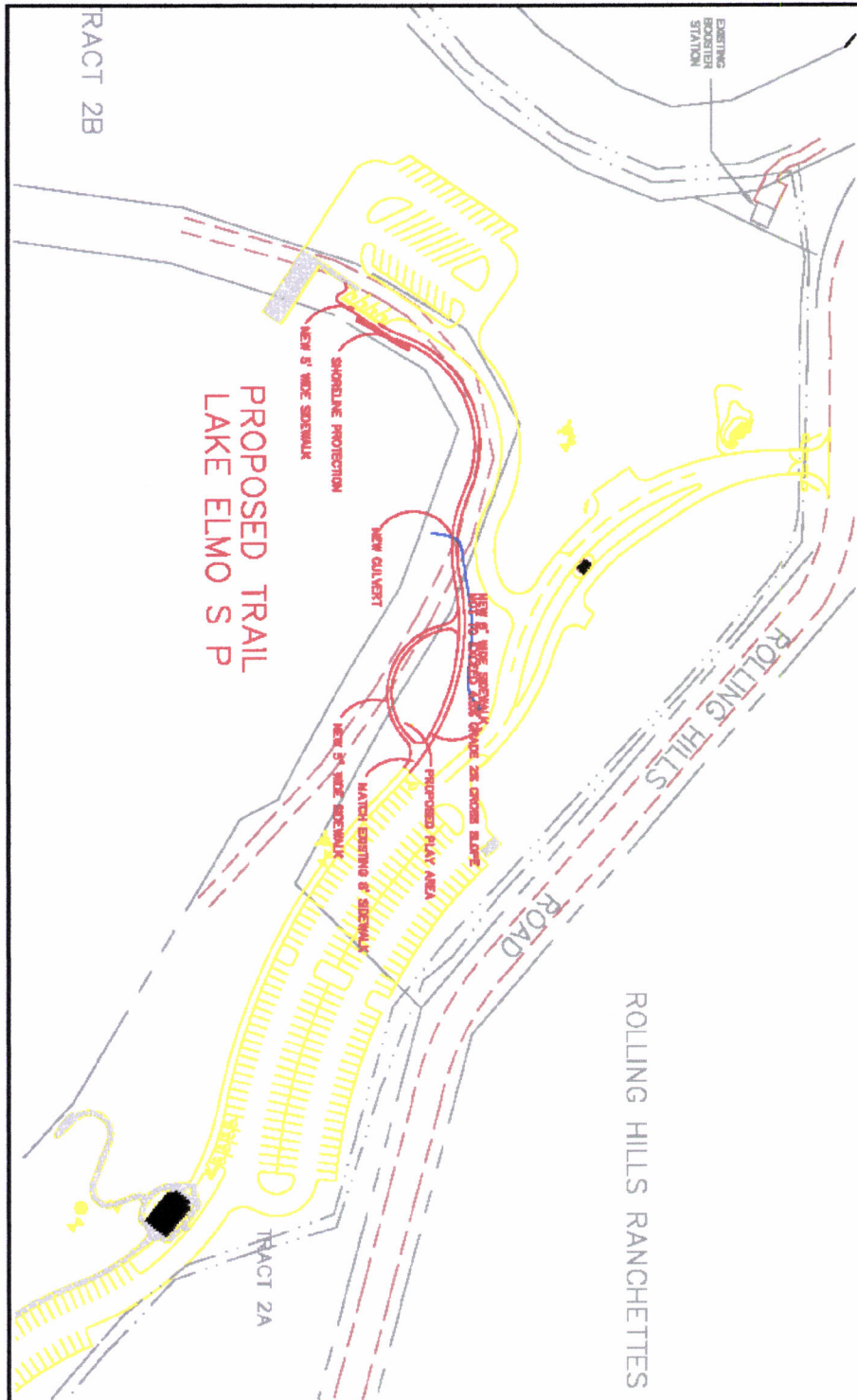
APPENDIX 2,  
continued

# LAKE ELMO STATE PARK





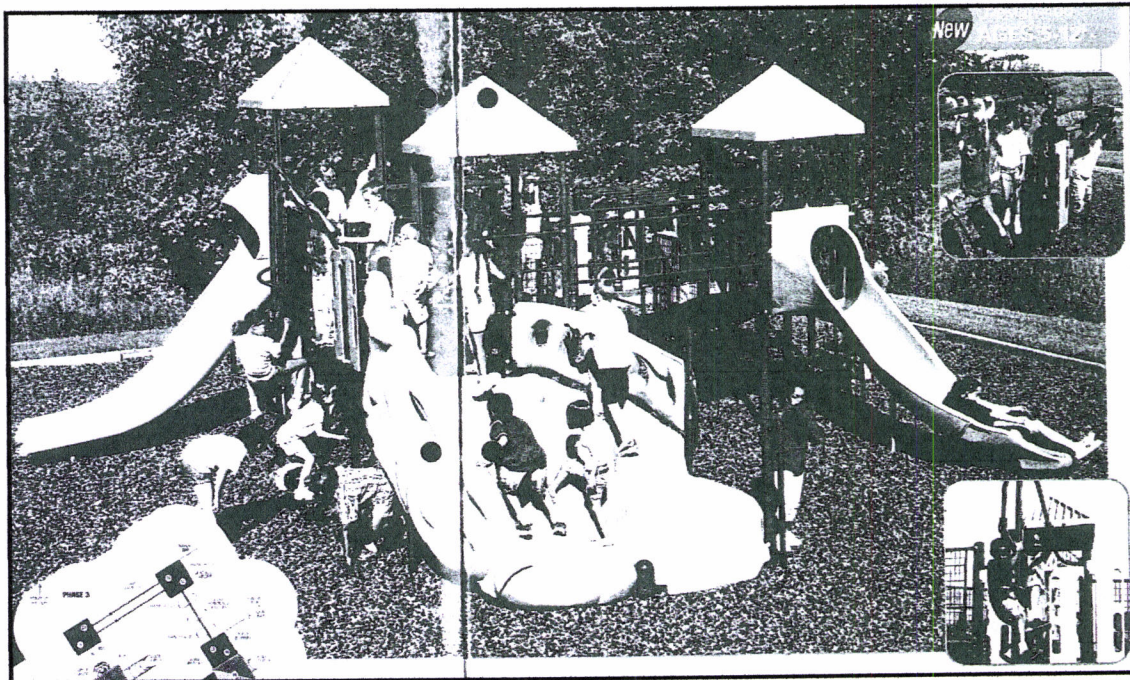
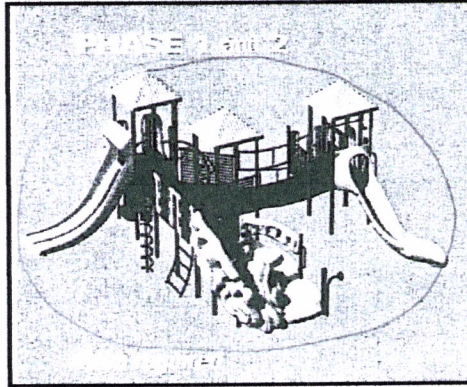
# APPENDIX 3 Site Plan: Project 1







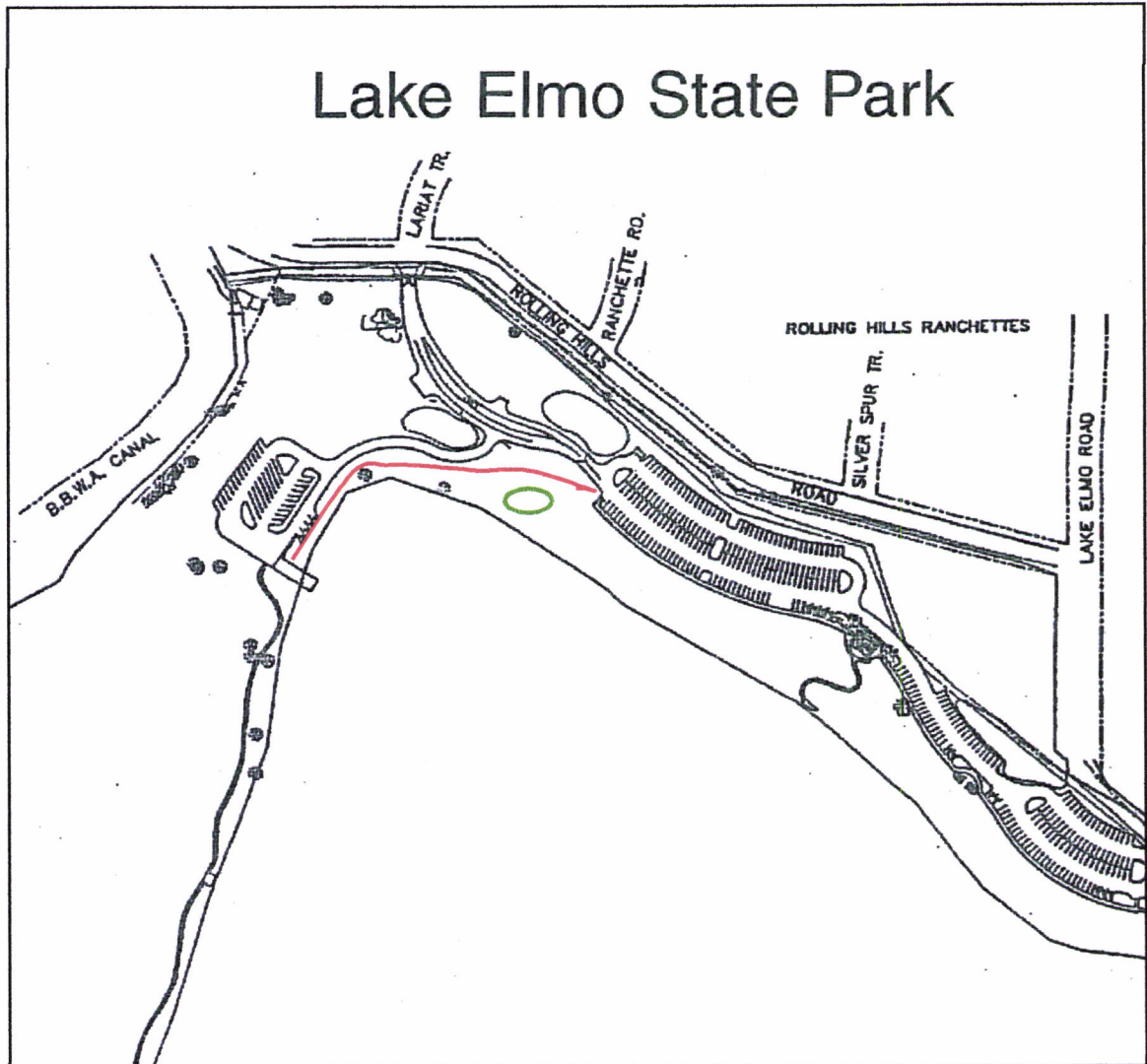
**APPENDIX 3, continued**  
**Site Plan: Project 1, playground pictures**








**APPENDIX 4**  
**Site Map: Project 1**



Green line delineates approximate location of proposed pedestrian trail. Yellow oval delineates approximate location of play area.



Map of Lake Elmo showing surrounding roads and subdivisions. The map includes labels for Rolling Hills Ranchettes, Silver Spur Tr., Lake Elmo Road, Foundation L., Tract A, MFWP Region 5 HQ, Angel Lane, Phoebe Dr., Wilet Dr., Meadowlark Subdivision, and R.W.A. Canal. A red rectangle highlights a section of the lake's western shore, a blue rectangle highlights a section of the eastern shore near the MFWP Region 5 HQ, and a green rectangle highlights a section of the southern shore near the Meadowlark Subdivision. A north arrow is located in the bottom right corner.

DATE <u>10/1/81</u> BY <u>LESTER</u> DRAWN BY <u>SMITH</u> SHEET <u>1</u> OF <u>1</u>	REVISION <u>1</u> REVISION <u>2</u> REVISION <u>3</u> REVISION <u>4</u> REVISION <u>5</u>	LAKE ELMO STATE PARK BILLINGS, MONTANA  NORTH SHORE IMPROVEMENTS MONTANA A/E 71-35-35-01 10/1/81	 <b>ENGINEERING, INC.</b> CONSULTING ENGINEERS & LAND SURVEYORS 2001 S.W. 24TH ST. SUITE 200 GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32608-1200 407-351-1000
--	---	---	--

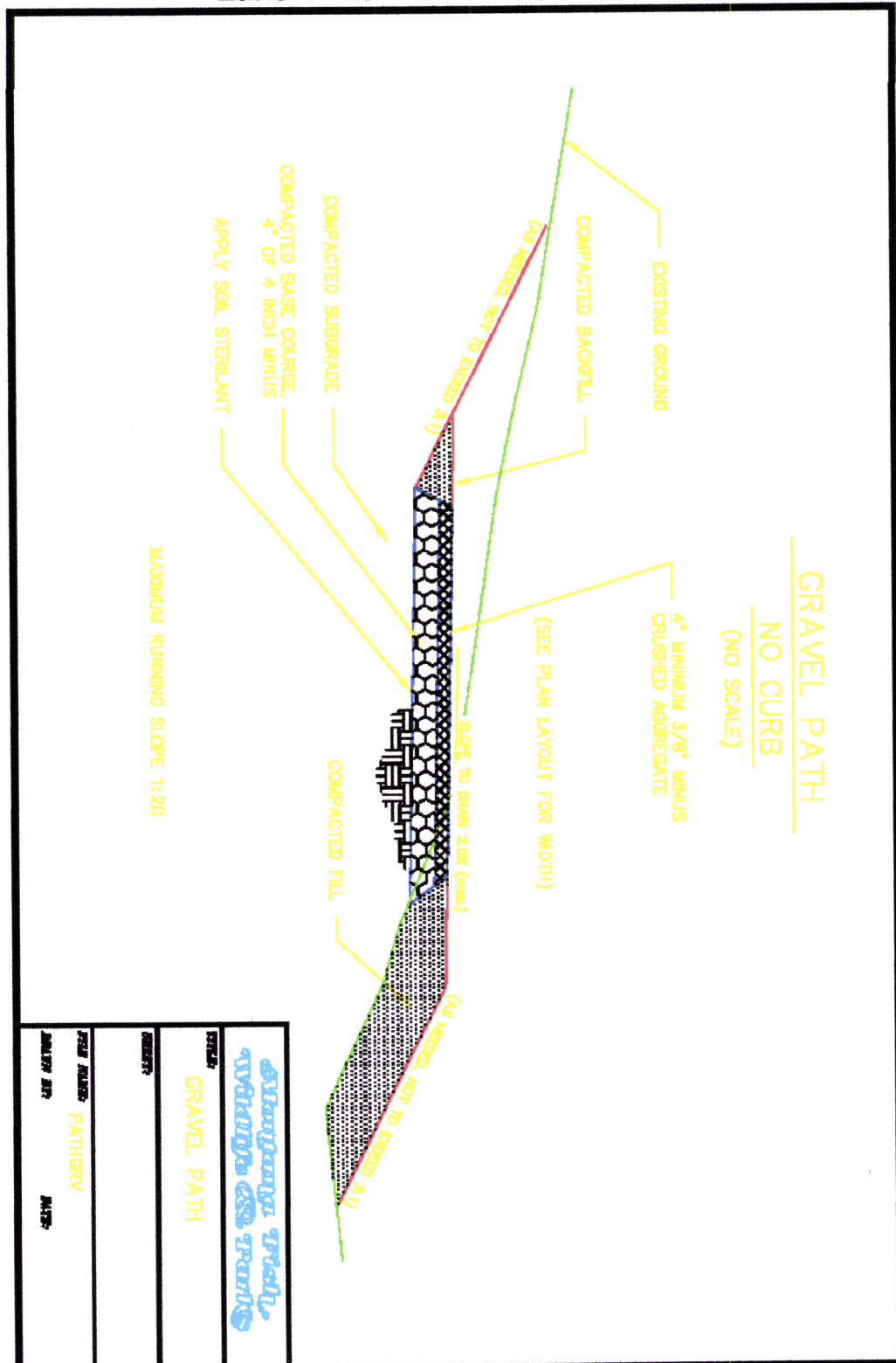
35





## APPENDIX 6

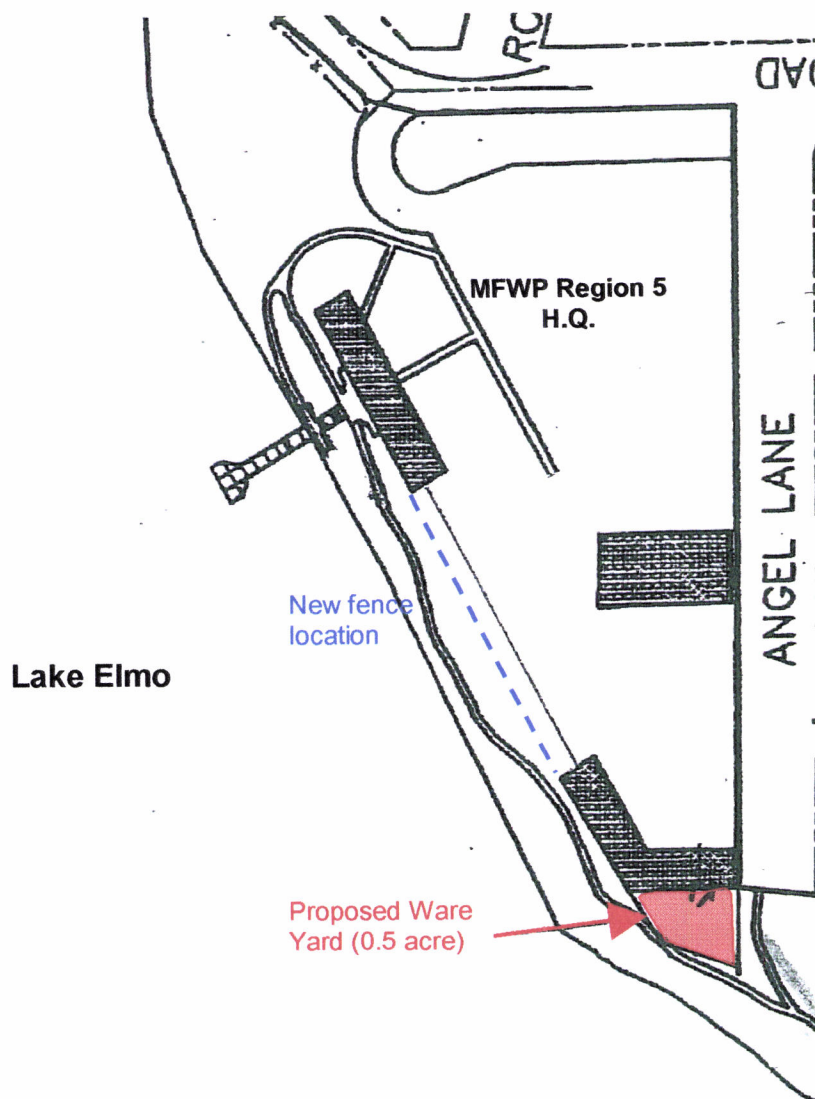
### Lake Elmo Trail Cross-Section







**APPENDIX 7**  
**Site Plan: Project 3**



Distances are not to scale.



**APPENDIX 8**  
**TOURISM REPORT**  
**MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA)/HB495**

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by HB495 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator  
Travel Montana-Department of Commerce  
PO Box 200533  
1424 9<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Helena, MT 59620-0533

**Project Name:** Lake Elmo State Park Improvements

**Project Description:** The proposed action is threefold. Project 1 includes extension of existing storage facilities, extension of existing parking area, and creation of a new ware yard at Lake Elmo State park. Project 2 includes widening (by 2 feet) and resurfacing (with crushed stone) the Lake Elmo Trail and nature trail extension. Project 3 includes installing a concrete sidewalk between Lake Elmo boat ramp and the adjacent beach parking area and installing a play area suitable for children age 5-12.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?  
NO YES **XX** If YES, briefly describe:

While the larger portion of this project involves storage facilities and parking for FWP staff and equipment, the improvements to the Lake Elmo Trail and addition of a play area suitable for young children would provide more or improved recreation opportunities for Lake Elmo visitors.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?  
NO YES **XX** If YES, briefly describe:

As described, the three projects appear to improve both the quality and quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities in the area.

Signature Victor A. Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator, Travel Montana  
Date November 9, 2004



APPENDIX 9  
SHPO Consultation

RECEIVED

MAR 22 2005

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY OFFICE



MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

225 North Roberts ♦ P.O. Box 201201 ♦ Helena, MT 59620-1201  
♦ (406) 444-2694 ♦ FAX (406) 444-2696 ♦ [www.montanahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org) ♦

November 10, 2004

RECEIVED

NOV 12 2004

Paul Valle  
FWP  
Design & Construction Bureau  
PO Box 200701  
Helena MT 59620-0701

DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION  
DEPT. OF FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

RE: LAKE ELMO IMPROVEMENTS. SHPO Project #: 2004111006

Dear Mr. Valle:

I have conducted a cultural resource file search for the above-cited projects located in and Sections 10,15, T1N R27E. According to our records there have been no previously recorded historic or archaeological sites within the designated search locales. The absence of cultural properties in the area does not mean that they do not exist but rather may reflect the absence of any previous cultural resource inventory in the area, as our records indicated none.

We feel that there is a low likelihood cultural properties will be impacted. We, therefore, feel that a recommendation for a cultural resource inventory is unwarranted at this time. However, should cultural materials be inadvertently discovered during this project we would ask that our office be contacted and the site investigated. Thank you for consulting with us.


If you have any further questions or comments you may contact me at (406) 444-7767 or by e-mail at [dmurdo@state.mt.us](mailto:dmurdo@state.mt.us).

Sincerely,

  
Damon Murdo  
Cultural Records Manager

cc: Terri Walters

File: FWP/PARKS/2004

 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE ♦ 1410 8th Ave ♦ P.O. Box 201202 ♦ Helena, MT 59620-1202  
♦ (406) 444-7715 ♦ FAX (406) 444-6575